

## REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 30, 2008. Claims 1-17 and 48-53 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 8 and 13 are in independent form. Claims 1, 7, 8, 12, 13, 17, 48, 50 and 52 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from U.S. Patents 6,078,308 (Rosenberg et al.) and 6,219,053 (Tachibana et al.), taken in combination, and Claims 48-53, as being obvious from *Rosenberg '308* in view of *Tachibana* and U.S. Patent 5,867,164 (Bornstein et al.).

Applicants submit that independent Claims 1, 8 and 13, together with the remaining claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

It is believed that the nature of what is currently being claimed has been discussed in adequate detail in previous papers, as has the prior art, and it is not believed to be necessary to repeat that discussion in full. Applicant notes that he has now amended the independent claims to clarify the kind of device to be designated, by replacing “first device” with “image input device” and “second device” with “image output device” throughout the claims. In addition, the claims have been amended to clarify that the combination function achievable by combining the designated devices is “a function of outputting, by the image output device, image data input by the image input device”.

In contrast, *Rosenberg '308* and *Tachibana* do not essentially disclose an operation of designating plural devices, combining the designated devices, and causing

these devices to perform a combination function achievable by such combination. Further, *Rosenberg* '308 and *Tachibana* do not display a setting screen for setting such combination function. Primarily, *Rosenberg* '308 and *Tachibana* do not disclose that an image input device and an image output device are designated, and thus do not disclose a function corresponding to the combination function itself of Applicant's claims by which the image data input by the image input device is output by the image output device.

More specifically, Fig. 4 of *Rosenberg* '308 shows a GUI 300 which is displayed on the display screen 20 of the computer system 18. However, as described at col. 15, lines 22-44, of *Rosenberg* '308, mere application programs such as word processors, web pages and the like, and operating systems such as Windows, Mac OS and the like are displayed on the GUI 300. This GUI does not display "a setting screen for setting a combination function achievable by combining plural designated devices", as recited in Claims 1, 8 and 13. In particular, an icon corresponding to an *image input device* and an icon corresponding to an *image output device* are never displayed on the GUI of *Rosenberg* '308. Accordingly, there is no reason or motivation in *Rosenberg* '308 for displaying "a setting screen for setting a combination function achievable by combining plural designated devices".

*Tachibana* provides an arrangement in which connections among nodes are displayed by using icons so that a user can easily see and recognize the connection relations of the nodes connected on a network. Figs. 13-15 of *Tachibana* suggest that designs (colors, shapes, etc.) of the designated icons can be changed. Applicant strongly believes, however, that nothing in *Tachibana* would teach or suggest an operation of designating an icon corresponding to an *image input device* and an icon corresponding to an *image output*

*device*, and causing the respective devices to perform processes. This is because, in *Tachibana*, the icon is displayed to monitor the nodes but not to designate the nodes that it causes them to perform the processes. Accordingly, in *Tachibana*, even if the icon is designated, no display is made of “a setting screen for setting a combination function achievable by combining plural designated devices”.

Moreover, even if *Rosenberg* '308 and *Tachibana* are combined in the manner proposed in the Office Action, Applicant submits that the result would not meet the quoted feature of the independent claims herein, and Applicant therefore believes that those claims are allowable over the art cited against them.

A review of the other art of record has filed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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